

HOBBS AND THE ABSOLUTE STATE
361

would have wavered. Yet he kept cautiously aloof from politics and politicians, as he was to explain after the Restoration. "Do you know that ever he sought any benefit either from Oliver or from any of his party, or was any way familiar with any of his ministers before or after his return, or curried favour with any of them? Do you ever hear that he took anything done to him by His Majesty in evil part or spoke of him otherwise than the best of his servants would do?" He admitted that he lost the favour of the young King for a brief period, owing to misrepresentations; but they were soon removed, and Charles II confessed that Hobbes never meant him any hurt. In arguing for obedience to the governments during the interregnum, he explains that he had in mind merely the royalists who desired to save their lives and property, not the rebels against Charles I. He was glad to be home and to re-enter the Cavendish household. He spent most of his time in London, where he found the books he needed and the friends whose company he enjoyed. Aubrey's list of them includes some distinguished names—Selden, Harvey, Petty, Cowley, Waller, Davenant, Samuel Cooper, the artist, whose portrait of Hobbes, described by Aubrey as one of his best, was later bought by Charles II and hung in his closet at Whitehall. Yet he was not pleased with the situation, and the state of religion moved him to wrath. The preachers, he complains in his autobiography, were often seditious. There was no creed and no decalogue, and he hated extemporary prayers. For the first three months after his return he failed to discover a church in which to take communion. The first task was to finish his large book, *De Corpore*, much of which was written at Paris between *De Cive* and

Tueviathan and which was published in 1655. The
 Dedicatory
 Epistle to the Earl of Devonshire explains that it
 was the first
 section of the *Elements of Philosophy*, though
 published after
 the third section on the state. For
 mathematicians it would
 be easy to understand, and most of it was new.
 The scientific
 studies of the Greeks had only been resumed in
 very recent
 times. Copernicus had founded astronomy.
 Galileo had
 opened the gate of natural philosophy by
 explaining the nature
 of motion. Harvey had discovered the
 circulation of the
 blood. Kepler, Gassendi, and Merseme had lent
 their aid.
 Natural philosophy therefore was but young,
 though civil
 philosophy, which began with *De Cm*, was
 younger still.
 The Greeks were mere dabblers, and most of
 the Christian